Autumn Internationals: Scotland Boost Ahead of Autumn Series

Scotland has been handed a major boost ahead of the Autumn Internationals, as three of Glasgow's key forwards have taken notable strides in their recoveries to return for next month's Tests. Prop Zander Fagerson, who missed the British and Irish Lions tour of Australia due to a calf setback and later endured a knee snag during his therapy in pre-season, has now been out of action for nearly six months.

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Powerful No.8 Jack Dempsey was close to making his modest retort a fortnight ago in Glasgow's URC opener against the Sharks after half a year out with a hamstring problem, only to withdraw after sustaining a groin strain during the warm-up session. Flanker Rory Darge, meanwhile, sustained medial ligament damage to his knee on 26 September against the Sharks.

His four-to-six-week recovery period leaves him racing to be fit for the USA clash on 1 November or the crucial autumn Test versus New Zealand a week later. Head coach Franco Smith offered encouraging updates on Friday, revealing that all three players are making strong progress, with Dempsey and Fagerson possibly featuring over the next fortnight.

Glasgow face Ospreys away next weekend before hosting the Bulls on 24 October, and both fixtures could provide vital game-time ahead of Scotland's Autumn Internationals schedule. I'm enthusiastic, Smith said. All three have shown

remarkable progress this week, taking significant steps forward. With Jack, I've just watched him train, and he looks in excellent condition.

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Positive Fitness Updates Ahead of Scotland's Autumn Internationals 2025 Series

He could be available for selection as early as next week, depending on final clearance early Monday or Tuesday, the coach added. Zander has also been training consistently. He's completed his return-to-play drills and running sessions, and his progression has been very encouraging. Rory is out of his knee brace and pain-free, which is an excellent sign from a recovery standpoint.

Smith praised the medical and conditioning departments for their commitment, describing their collective efforts as vital in helping the trio regain full fitness for Scotland's Autumn Internationals Series. The medical and S&C teams have worked tirelessly this week to ensure those players receive every opportunity to compete for Scotland selection, he said.

Matt Fagerson, Zander's brother, who featured at No.8 in both of Glasgow's opening URC matches against Sharks and Benetton, has suffered a minor ankle knock and will miss Saturday's home meeting with Dragons. Smith clarified that the back-row forward was planned to rest. If it were a semi-final, quarter-final, or final, he would play, he clarified. But this lies within a five-week block of URC matches.

Every Scottish player targeting the Autumn Internationals 2025 will feature in four out of five matches, ensuring sufficient match sharpness and proper recovery ahead of the Tests. We don’t want players completing seven or eight consecutive games at the beginning of the season, Smith emphasized.

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Scotland Vs New Zealand: Glasgow Gain Boost Ahead of Autumn Internationals

Another Scotland hopeful, Alex Craig, a summer recruit from Scarlets, will make his Warriors debut on Saturday after overcoming a hamstring issue. He joins Scott Cummings in the second row. I’m eager to see him in action, Smith said of the 28-year-old, who last represented Scotland against Australia in the previous autumn campaign. We tried to bring him in last season, but it didn’t materialize.

He trained hard through pre-season to regain shape after injury, and it’s fantastic to welcome him into the Warriors family. Smith described Craig as a traditional, hard-working lock whose expertise in the set-piece and breakdown will add strength to Glasgow’s pack. He’s a physical player, excellent at carrying and cleaning. He’ll provide the aggression we expect from our forwards, he added.

Meanwhile, opportunities also arise against the Dragons for the adaptable Euan Ferrie, one of Smith’s hybrid forwards, starting at No.8, and Maccenzie Duncan, player of the match against Benetton, at openside. Ollie Smith, occasionally

Scotland’s full-back, replaces Stafford McDowall at outside center, a role he filled last season after recovering from a serious knee injury.

He’s capable of playing full-back and wing, very versatile, Smith said. We value players who can adapt and perform across multiple positions. Those who embrace flexibility enhance both their selection prospects and the team’s depth heading into the Autumn Internationals, particularly the Scotland Vs New Zealand clash.

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